



BEACON HILL AREA

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BEACON HILL AREA NCD PLAN

DECEMBER 15, 2005 ■



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Residential Design Standards	3
Non-Residential Design Standards	15
Appendix A—Maps	A1
Appendix B—Property Owners Listing	B1
Appendix C—NCD Meeting Schedule	C1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the City's 1997 Master Plan and the 1998 Community Revitalization Action Group report, the concept of the Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) was determined to be a proactive tool to use to address neighborhood sustainability through compatible infill construction and rehabilitation in unique areas of the city. Since the adoption of the NCD enabling ordinance and development of the NCD Program, four (4) NCD Ordinances have been approved by City Council – South Presa Street/South St. Mary's Street (NCD-1), Alta Vista (NCD-2), Ingram Hills (NCD-3) and Whispering Oaks (NCD-4).

The Beacon Hill neighborhood was selected to be the first neighborhood to begin the designation process for the 2004-2005 Fiscal Year. The ordinance process was initiated on the basis of its recommendation found in the Midtown Neighborhoods Plan, adopted on October 12, 2000.

There are 520.6 acres of land and 1,923 parcels within the proposed district. Neighborhood Conservation Districts can be established in areas that possess distinctive character-defining features, where at least 75% of the land area within the district contains structures that are at least 25 years old and at least 75% of the land area within the district is improved or developed. The proposed Beacon Hill Area NCD meets the ordinance requirements with 92.1% of the land area containing structures that are 25 years or older and 95.4% of the land area presently improved.

The residential architecture is dominated by Craftsman style (also called Bungalow style) homes with a good mixture of other architectural styles and building sizes across the geography of the NCD Area. The commercial corridors along West Hildebrand Avenue, Blanco Road and Fredericksburg Road possess unique scale and building configurations similar to other successful pedestrian-oriented environments in San Antonio.

While the architecture of the area, particularly in the residential areas, is an important feature, the design standards found in this plan are not designed to enforce architectural style, but are crafted to perpetuate historical arrangements of buildings, celebrate and prevent concealment of the original character of buildings, de-emphasize and conceal spaces designed for the automobile, increase the number and quality of spaces designed for interaction between neighbors and improve the visual appeal of the entire area. While restrictive in nature, the design standards are not designed to make improvements or development costly.

The completion of the designation process brings to fruition the neighborhood's idea of protecting and preserving the unique character of the Beacon Hill neighborhood; an idea which was nurtured over the course of several years. In addition, this designation meets the intent and upholds the spirit of Neighborhood Conservation District Program.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT:

The Beacon Hill Area Neighborhood Conservation District Plan is divided into three major sections: the Residential Design Standards, Non-Residential Design Standards, and Appendices.

The Residential Design Standards specifically address design-related issues for properties that contain residential uses ranging from single-family residential uses up to the less common high-density residential uses.

The Non-Residential Design Standards target parcels with uses other than residential, such as commercial, office and industrial (to a limited extent) uses.

In each section, several design issues are addressed in accordance with the comments and information gathered during the public meeting process. On many of the pages, notes and definitions are annotated to provide the user information about the character of the neighborhood as it pertains to a specific development item or define a specific term that applies to a particular design standard. The definitions are explained in accepted language found in architectural / construction publications, which includes the *Unified Development Code*. Recommendations are also found on some pages which describe certain building or design techniques that are desired in the area but not an enforceable condition of approval or denial of a requested permit.

The final sections of this document are the Map Appendix, which helps to graphically identify the character defining features found in the neighborhood, and the Property Owners Listing, which is a required component of the NCD Plan as set forth by *UDC Section 35-335, Neighborhood Conservation Districts*.